

REMARKS

The claims remaining in the present application are Claims 1-27. Independent Claims 1, 10, and 19 have been amended. No new matter has been added.

SPECIFICATION

Paragraph 3 of the Office Action, states "The listing of references in the specification is not a proper information disclosure statement. 37 CFR 1.98(b) requires a list of all patents, publications, or other information submitted for consideration by the Office..." Applicants have submitted an information disclosure statement of the patents, publications, etc. that are mentioned in the specification of the present application. Therefore, Applicants believe that this objection has been addressed.

CLAIM REJECTIONS

35 U.S.C. §102

In paragraph 4 of the Office Action, Claims 1-27 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. patent 6,308,163 by Du et al. (referred to herein as "Du"). The cited reference does not teach or suggest embodiments of the present invention.

Amended independent Claim 1 recites,

" A method of assigning resources to nodes in a workflow comprising:

defining a plurality of nodes, wherein said nodes are tasks to be executed within said workflow;

defining said resources for execution of said nodes;

storing a set of data items having variables pertaining to execution of said workflow; and

assigning said resources to said nodes for execution thereof in accordance with a set of rules, said set of rules for controlling the execution of said workflow, wherein each rule of said set of rules specifies an event, a condition, and an action."

The amendment to Claim 1 has support in the instant application, e.g., 10/032,893, in numerous places among which are pages 23-24, page 37, Claim 5, pages 39-44.

Du does not teach or suggest "wherein each rule of said set of rules specifies an event, a condition, and an action," among other things, as recited by Claim 1. For example, Du teaches at Col. 1 lines 41-43 a system and method for accessing resources in order to perform a work item. Du's system and method use a multi-level resource management hierarchy. Referring to figures 2 and 3 and the summary of the invention, the hierarchy can include one or more enterprise global resource managers (ERMs), one or more site ERMs (SRMs), and one or more external local resource managers (LRMs). At col. 4 lines 45-47, Du states, "Preferably, the system utilizes a resource model that is hierarchical collection of resource types. A resource type is used to organize resources into groups of resource instances with the same capabilities."

In the Response to Arguments section, the Office Action asserts that Du teaches Claim 1's "rules" at Col. 12, lines 46-62. At Col. 12, lines 46-53, Du states,

Roles are logical representations of resource requirements for workflow activities in terms of capabilities. Roles are used by activity definers (when creating new activities) to map activities into resources. Roles may be a Boolean expression specifying the resource types needed for the activity.

Therefore, it appears that the Office Action is asserting that Du's "roles" teach Claim 1's "rules."

Du provides two examples of roles R1 and R2 at Col. 12 lines 60-62, as follows:

A1: {Role: R1 = {Peripheral and Software}}
A2: {Role: R2 = {(Programmer and Analyst) and (Computer or Secretary)}}}

As can be seen from Col. 12 lines 46-53 and Col. 12 lines 60-62, Du's roles do not specify events, conditions, and actions.

In paragraph 9, the Office Action appears to assert that Du teaches events, conditions, and actions at Col. 10 lines 61-64, Col. 11 lines 5-6, 8-15, and 17-25. However, at Col. 10 lines 61-64 Du states, "The WFMS uses at least one repository of business process rules to identify what the next process activity is and which resource should carry out that process activity." From this it appears that the Office Action is now asserting that Du's "business process rules," instead of Du's "roles," teach Claim 1's "rules." However, despite the inconsistency of the Office Action's assertions,

we shall assume for the sake of argument that Du's "business process rules" are analogous to Claim 1's "rules" in order to fully demonstrate that Du's "business process rules" do not teach Claim 1's "rules" in that at most, Col. 10 lines 61-64 teaches an action, e.g., "process activity."

Col. 11 lines 5-6 of Du state, "Stored policy rules are consulted in the determination of abandonment." It is unclear to Applicants what in this portion of Du teaches a rule, an event, a condition, and an action let alone "each rule of said set of rules specifies an event, a condition and an action," as Claim 1 recites. Col. 11, lines 8-15 of Du state,

A decision step 180 of determining whether the order has been properly authorized is directly related to the processing of the order. Again, the database of policy and resource schema is utilized in performing this step. A determination that the order is not properly authorized returns the workflow process to the determination of whether the order should be abandoned. However, if the order is properly authorized, a confirmation is sent to the customer at step 182.

Again it is unclear to Applicants what in Col. 11, lines 8-15 of Du teaches a rule, an event, a condition, or an action let alone "each rule of said set of rules specifies an event, a condition and an action," as Claim 1 recites.

Similarly, Du does not teach "wherein each rule of said set of rules specifies an event, a condition, and an action," at Col. 11 lines 17-25. Further, it is unclear to Applicants what in Col. 11 lines 17-25 of Du teaches a rule, an event, a condition, or an action let alone "each rule of said set of

rules specifies an event, a condition and an action," as Claim 1 recites.

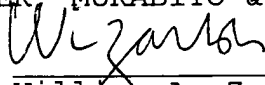
For the foregoing reasons, Claim 1 is respectfully believed to be patentable over Bolas. Applicants respectfully request allowance of Claim 1. Amended Independent Claims 10 and 19 should be patentable over Du for similar reasons that Claim 1 should be patentable over Du. Applicants respectfully request allowance of Claims 10 and 19.

Claims 2-9, 11-18, and 20-27 depend respectively from Independent Claims 1, 10, and 19. Further these dependent Claims include additional limitations which further make them patentable. Claims 2-9, 11-18, and 20-27 are believed to be allowable at least by virtue of depending respectively on Claims 1, 10, and 19.

CONCLUSION

In light of the above listed amendments and remarks, reconsideration of the rejected claims is requested. Based on the arguments and amendments presented above, it is respectfully submitted that Claims 1-27 overcome the rejections of record. For reasons discussed herein, Applicants respectfully request that Claims 1-27 be considered by the Examiner. For reasons discussed in a previous response, Applicants respectfully submit that withdrawn claims 1-27 are patentable. Therefore, allowance of Claims 1-27 is respectfully solicited.

Should the Examiner have a question regarding the instant amendment and response, the Applicants invite the Examiner to contact the Applicants' undersigned representative at the below listed telephone number.

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